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ART. XIV.—*History of Tennasserim, by Captain JAMES LOW, Madras Army, M.R.A.S., &c. &c.*

*Introduction.*

THE following abstract is taken from Captain Low's history of the provinces wrested from the Burmese during the late war, which, through his friend in this country, was presented to the ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY. Several portions of it have already been read at the general meetings of the society, and it is intended to continue to give abstracts from it in the successive numbers of this journal, in the confident hope that the British public will speedily call for the entire publication of a work containing the most authentic information respecting a country, our relations with which are daily increasing in value and importance.

It has been deemed just to the author and to the reader to present this abridgement as nearly as possible in Captain Low's own words: though manifestly not a practised writer, he describes the results of his experience with a strength and simplicity which could only be acquired by personal and intimate knowledge of his subject.

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CHAPTER I.

OBSERVATIONS, &c.

THE operations of the army employed against the kingdom of Ava brought, during the first campaign, the Tennasserim provinces under British sway. They fell at a period when their resources had not been affected by the contest; and the struggle which separated them from Ava was too short to impoverish them, or to diminish the interest with which a stranger might have been disposed to view them. It is proposed to describe the Tennasserim coast as it existed immediately after the conquest; and incidentally to notice circumstances connected with its condition since that period. It may be proper to premise, that the government of Prince of Wales' Island had been pleased to depute me to this coast as second in a political mission, and that the supreme government had subsequently honoured me, by requiring my services on the coast with reference to Siamese negotiations.

The coast of Tennasserim, in the strict acceptance of the term, includes perhaps a space lying betwixt about  $8^{\circ} 10'$ , and  $13^{\circ} 30'$

north latitude. To save unnecessary details and repetitions, the three provinces will be treated, so far as practicable, as a whole. With respect to what may be termed their *authentic general history*, Mr. CRAWFORD's valuable work, entitled *A Mission to Siam*, may, amongst others, be referred to. In 1687, the English at Mergui were massacred; Tavoy was independent in 1759; in 1793, the Siamese and Burmans contended for Tennasserim, and in 1824, it fell under British rule.

TANNAU, OR TENNASSERIM PROPER, AND MERGUI.

THIS province extends from *Pilla-pye-hya*, or *Me ma-Myú* river, on the north, to *Pakchan*, a river which marks its termination on the south; east are the Siamese hills, and on the west the sea.

*Mergui*, the only town in the province, lies in latitude  $12^{\circ} 12'$  north, and about  $98^{\circ} 24'$  east longitude; the Burmans of this coast term it *Beit-myú* and *Mrit*, and the Peguers *Brút*.

The old town of the same name, which flourished until the inroads of the Siamese became too frequent to be resisted, lies about thirty-five miles up the Tennasserim river; it is reported to be now repeopling, and may be said to contain 150 houses, with a native officer to protect them. The Siamese range is a grand natural barrier, which is only at wide intervals in any perceptible degree broken. The highest peaks may be estimated at about 5000 feet, and the breadth of the belt, in this quarter at about ten miles: it seems to narrow itself as the breadth of the continent diminishes, but is yet so broad, in the space betwixt eight and ten degrees north latitude, as to approach the coast within ten miles. In the latitude of *Tavoy*, this range with its parallel ones, appears forty miles wide at the least; in that of *Martaban* they present a frowning barrier, the breadth of which has not been ascertained. The whole of this belt is clothed in dense primeval forests, and is only occasionally visited by Siamese or Burmans; it is filled with wild beasts, and the valleys, formed by the inferior ranges, give shelter to those Karian tribes who disdain, or avoid, as far as they are able, any dependence on either of the nations above noticed.

The chief rivers of *Tannau* are the river of that name, and its branches, the *Keaupeah* or *Gaupeah*, which flows into the sea about thirty miles north of *Mergui*, and another about fifty miles to the south of *Mergui*, called *Pakchan*, which forms the boundary with the Siamese territory on this coast, as before noticed. The whole coast is, however, intersected at short intervals by creeks and small streams.

The *Tannau* river rises amongst the hills in about 16° north latitude; and, after flowing parallel to the *Tavoy* province, through a valley scarce wide enough to afford it a free passage, and where it has all the characteristics of a mountain torrent, it keeps the general line of the coast, receives in its way many small tributary streams from the eastern mountains, and finally, when nearly due-east of *Mergui*, turns suddenly towards the sea, into which it disembogues itself by three mouths. The northern entrance is alone considered quite safe for large shipping; but junks and vessels of sixty tons burden have been known to pass through the southern passage. The *Thetis*, Bombay cruiser, sailed up the latter to Old Tennasserim in 1824-25. The river is not safely navigable for boats further than one hundred miles from its mouth; but the Kareans, who live higher up, convey their articles for barter on bamboo rafts down the stream. Prahus of burden cannot ascend above Old Tennasserim; a branch diverges to the south-east of that place, which was often taken advantage of by the Siamese, when on plundering excursions. The main branch is called *Chaungí*, or *Large River*, a name which it retains in *Tavoy*, at the place where it was crossed by me in my route to the *Naye taung lan Pass*, literally *The Nuts-stream Hill*.

## TAVOY.

THE *Tavoy* province is bounded on the north by the *Ye* district, at the *Pauktein nála*; on the south, by the *Mímahmyau nála* or creek; on the east, by the Siamese mountains; and west, by the sea: and it may be roughly estimated to contain 3600 square miles. It is a more hilly tract than *Tannau*, and perhaps less fertile by nature; the natives term it indifferently *Tawai*, *Dawai*, *Dawe*, or *Dahweh*.

The principal hills are those of the low range which runs north from *Tavoy* point, and nearly dividing into equal portions that narrow isthmus lying betwixt the river and the sea. The keys of this province are, the mouth of the *Tavoy* river, *Moyet*, on the sea shore; *Kalíng Aung*, on the north; *Kcat-poa*, on the east; *Taun Byaup*, south-east; and *Mendat*, on the south.

The chief rivers are the *Tavoy* river, the entrance to which lies in about 13° 32' N. lat.; the *Chaungí*, or *Tennasserim* river, which flows about thirty miles eastward of the *Tavoy* river; the *Taun Byaup*, which falls into the latter at its mouth; the *Maung Magan*, flowing into the sea nearly opposite to *Tavoy*; the *Kanneinduh*, or *Pauktain*, which falls into the *Tavoy* river about eight miles south of the town, after having watered the eastern part of the province;

and the *Pimbuí* river, which joins the *Taun Byaup* just before this last reaches the Tavoy river. The Tavoy river is picturesquely studded with islands, which, however, renders its navigation to square-rigged vessels tedious and difficult; properly considered it is not navigable to such beyond the town, although one has been known to venture about five miles further up. The town lies in  $14^{\circ} 4' \text{ N. lat.}$ , but boats of six coyans burden go up as far, in the dry season, as *Wúmbo*, at spring tides (which rarely reach *Kcat-kún* village), and, when the river is full, small canoes can reach *Káli-gáon*, from whence its source is not far distant, for while there, in the driest month, the bed was found by me to consist of broad and deep pools, connected by narrow channels of running water scarcely ankle deep. The chief town is Tavoy, and there are reckoned 110 villages scattered over the plains and on the skirts of hills: the chief passes to Siam are the *Naye-daung*, and *Taun Byaup*.

*Ye*, or *Kolayé*, has been long considered as a dependency of Tavoy; it is a district of little note, and chiefly valuable for the timber it yields. It lies between the Balamein river on the north, and *Káli-gáon*, or *Kalín-gáon*, boundary on the south, and is confined by the Siamese range on the east; a pillar was formerly set up at a place called *Myí-hya-hyaupstein*, to mark the boundary. There are several elevated tracts in the district, and the *Maloe-taung*, a high hill bearing south-east of the town, is conspicuous: the face of the country is nearly overspread with forest and brushwood; here and there a few open spaces cultivated with rice may be seen. The river is not deep enough for square-rigged vessels to sail in, but large native prahus are here built, and sent to Rangoon and Martaban: the course of the river was explored by me up to the Kayen village, where the tide fails; a passage further cannot be effected, except in a canoe.

#### MAUTAMA OR MARTABAN.

THIS province, which is now nearly divided betwixt the British and Burmans, lies, as far as has been ascertained, betwixt  $16^{\circ}$  and  $18^{\circ} 20'$  of north latitude: on the north it has *Taung-damí*, and part of the *Chetaung* and *Thaum-pagú* province, and the Siamese hills; on the south it is bounded by the *Bálamein* river, which separates it from *Yé*; on the east is the Siamese range, or that tract called *Miya Waddy*; and on the west is the sea and the *Chetaung* province; on the north-west lies *Teitkilla*; and on the north-east, the *Saungín* river; south-east lies *Phíya-thaung-jú*, or Samchu, or the three pagodas; and south-west is *Púlagyín* island: the breadth of

the province may be rated at from sixty, at the lowest, up to one hundred and twenty miles, and its area may be taken at about 12,000 square miles.

The province consists of extensive plains, occasionally crossed by low ranges of hills, or diversified by insulated mountains and rocks : the chief hills are the *Jenkycit-p'hra-taung*, which is rendered very conspicuous by its peak, and lies westward of the Burman town ; the *Jogabon*, or *Zoegabin-taung*, to the northward of the same place, and the *Daung-damie-taung*, *Miyein-taung*, and *Miyein-taung*. The ranges are, one stretching from the range on which the town stands towards *Jenkycit*, the *Martaban* range running northward parallel to the river, and the *Malamein* and *Wakrá* ranges ; there are several small ranges of the great Siamese belt, which lie properly within the province.

Martaban is watered by fine rivers, almost all of which admit of an advantageous inland navigation. The principal of these is the *San-lin* of the Burmans, and *Krúng Mautama* of the Peguers.

The Siamese mountains have a majestic aspect when viewed from the Burman town ; and they are in this latitude about ninety miles on an average, from the sea. They trend to the north ; and the distance rapidly increases as the angle they form with the coast widens. Several peaks seem to the eye 5000 feet high, at the least. The range is broken in two spots on the Martaban frontier, through which lie the passes to Siam. The most important of these, and the chief key to the military position of Martaban, is the *Phra Song Chú*, or " Three Pagodas' Pass," termed by the Siamese *Phra Chedi Sam-ong*. The Pagodas lie in  $15^{\circ} 18' \text{ N. lat.}$  and  $98^{\circ} 22' 15'' \text{ E. long.}$ , according to Capt. Grant's observation after the war.<sup>1</sup>

This pass is not precipitous, like the *Nayédaung* one leading from Tavoy into Siam. It takes about twenty-three days to reach Bangkok, the capital of Siam, from the town of Martaban, by regular stages ; but the natives perform it sometimes in a much shorter period. The first two or three stages are on the *Attharam* river ; thence to *Mé-nam náe*, a post on the Siamese river of that name, occupies six or eight days. In three days more the traveller reaches *Kambúrí*, a town of some note, and an important frontier post, where the *Mé Khlang* separates into two branches. He then sails down this river two days to *Ratphrí*, where he enters a canal, which leads him to the

<sup>1</sup> The latitude here is nearly the same as that assigned to it, from native information, in my plan of the Siamese empire compiled in 1822, but in it the longitude was put too far to the east.

*T'ha-chin* river; and in two or three days afterwards he reaches *Banhok*.

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## EARLY HISTORY OF THE PROVINCES.

## FANNAU.

No authentic accounts have been obtained of the early condition of this province; it appears, however, to have been first peopled by the *T'hai*, or Siamese race. At present the natives exhibit Burman, rather than Siamese features.

The Siamese, as the people of *Laii*, or *Laos*, say, branched off as a colony from them about the year 813 of Christ; but they do not appear to have reached the Gulf of Siam for a long period afterwards. They must have then spread down the coast, and probably colonised Mergui long before the Burmans had become a formidable nation to their neighbours. Europeans much frequented it about the close of the seventeenth century. The English had a settlement here in 1687, but the settlers were nearly all massacred. In 1793, the Siamese yielded and ceded to Ava the whole coast of Tennasserim south, to *Pak Chan*.

## TAVOY.

The accounts given to me by the Burmans relative to this province, previous to its becoming known to Europeans, are very meagre, and somewhat fanciful.

It is said, that about two thousand years ago colonies arrived from Martaban, and from the eastward; and that, long after this event, people reached it from *Arracan*, in search of iron, and settled at *Daungive*, or *Thongive*, about five miles upwards from the mouth of the Tavoy river, and on the west bank. They called the country *Dahiveh*, meaning "knife buy;" and they brought with them the Buddhist religion.

The present Tavoyers affirm that this town was destroyed by preternatural agency, and that still, at times, and in the dead of night, are to be heard sounds made by the spirits of the former inhabitants, as if engaged in the several occupations they followed when in life. Another colony settled at *Kalingáon*, about fifty miles above the present town. When visited by me in 1825, there was no appearance of a town of any note having stood there. The only indication of

such having existed somewhere in this direction, is the small pagoda which crowns a neighbouring hill, and the ruins of a large one, a mile and a half to the eastward of this place. But every remarkable hill almost has a pagoda on its top or side. When the town of Tavoy was built, the natives could not have been under much apprehension from the quarter of Siam; else they would have built it on the west bank of the river, where the ground is higher and more defensible.

The intermixture of various tribes with the aborigines, or with colonies derived from distant places, together with the change produced by subjection to Siamese and Burmans by turns, and finally to the latter, may be supposed to have obliterated any decided individuality of form, feature, or character, possessed by the first holders of the country.

The English recognised this province as an independent one in 1753; but we have no exact account of their appearance, or of the manners of the natives at that time.

The Burmans under CHEDÚKANANÍ and MAHA NORATHA conquered Tavoy, and dispossessed the independent chief who governed it in 1766; and DEBADIE attacked the Siamese, and invested their capital in this year. In 1767, Ava was attacked by the Chinese. In 1793, the Burman governor, NAMEA PYÚ, or MAUNMEA PYÚ, turned traitor, and delivered the Tavoy province into the hands of the Siamese; but it was soon retaken by the Burmans. The Siamese, however, contrived to carry off five thousand of the inhabitants during their occupancy of the territory.

Shortly previous to the subjection of it to the British, it was disturbed by the inroads of a bold Siamese chief, called NHAMEH, who carried off crowds of prisoners to Siam; but he was at length, through the treachery of his young mistress, a Peguer, surprised in a dark night by a body of Tavoyers, led by a man named MA-LUMDA, a native of the town, and secretary to the *Myíwún*. His party was dispersed, and he was taken prisoner. The Burmans shut him up in an iron cage, and sent him to Rangoon, where his death by cholera saved him, probably, from a more cruel end. This MA-LUMDA was rewarded with a thousand *ticals* of silver and honorary dresses, and he was made third in council at Tavoy; yet it was he who, when the British force was approaching the fort by the river, seized the governor, or *Myíwún*, and delivered up the place without firing a shot from the walls.

The governor was sent to Bengal, and his three wives and family



to Rangoon. They were there in great poverty, as it is probable that their property had been plundered for some time. At their earnest request, I gave them a free passage back to Tavoy, on my return to that place, for which they appeared very grateful. The first of these, and the real head of the family, is a very clever person; and, like women of her rank in Ava, is reported to have shared pretty equally with her husband in the toils of government. When on board, she was unwell with rheumatism; and to cure it, employed the means generally resorted to on all occasions of illness by the natives of these countries, *shampooing*, which was performed by one of her slaves trampling with bare feet over her body.

## YÉ, OR KOLA YE.

The traditional account of this province is very short. The natives say, that in the ninety-third year of their era, which corresponds with A.D. 731, a certain princess, called MARA DEVÍ,<sup>1</sup> a daughter of the King of Tavoy, formed the first establishment. In the year 800 of their era (A.D. 1438), NARATHA JEDÍ MÉN, prince of Tavoy, improved the town and stockaded it; the latter operation having occupied five months and seven days. This town then got the name of *Raja Siha dyera pura*.

## MARTABAN.

My endeavours, while in this province, were ineffectual in bringing to light any credible or even plausible account of its earliest state. No buildings are extant of a more ancient date than that of the introduction of the religion of BUDDHA, since those actually existing are evidently the offspring of the latter; and the assumption by Burman *Phingies*, or priests, of all the sacerdotal offices in the province, sufficiently accounts for no Peguan records having been preserved:—none, at least, to my knowledge, have been discovered.

<sup>1</sup> The occurrence of Sanskrit terms sufficiently indicates that Buddhism had been introduced at this period.

## CHAPTER II.

TOWNS, POPULATION, DRESS, APPEARANCE, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS  
OF THE PEOPLE.

## TANNAU AND MERGUI.

WHEN the stockaded town of Mergui was taken, after a short resistance, in 1824, the population was concentrated in and near it. The inroads of the Siamese had driven them from the interior, and the war had called forth the aid of every man capable of bearing arms. It was believed that, taking advantage of the alarm of the Merguiers, the Siamese had carried off about one thousand persons into slavery. The greatest number it is supposed of these were afterwards sent back, agreeably to a treaty with the British; but the Siamese subsequently supplied their place by drawing extensively on the Malayan population of the *Keddah* territory, which they were equally bound, by the same treaty, to protect.

At the period alluded to, this province contained a population nearly as follows, computed according to the number of houses:—

	Houses.
Mergui Town, divided into six compartments . . . . .	1200
Six villages . . . . .	300
Straggling hamlets . . . . .	100
Total houses . . . . .	1600
	Souls.
Total averaged lay population . . . . .	8000
Add priests in monasteries . . . . .	200
Total . . . . .	8200
Averaging about five inhabitants to every house.	

In this population there were about three hundred Chinese, two hundred half-Portuguese, a few other native Christians, and a few Siamese; the body being composed of Burmans and Peguers. The population may have since increased in a small degree.

The people are chiefly employed in agriculture and in petty traffic. Their manufactures are very inferior to those of Tavoy, and their mechanics are not very expert; they can, however, construct a good-sized vessel, with the assistance of experienced superintendents from Rangoon or elsewhere. The women weave plain and checkered clothes; some of silk, others of silk and cotton mixed: these are reckoned durable.

The people in general are disposed to a peaceable life. They used to live in constant dread of the Siamese; and it was said that the governor could not muster more than three hundred men on whom he could depend, to defend the town when it was attacked by our troops. Their hopes of peace and security against Siamese inroad probably rested on the occupation of the place by an enemy of whose lenity they might have been aware. The personal appearance of the natives is much the same as that of the Burmans. Except when they go abroad, and even then, the dress of the men consists merely of a loose silk or cotton habiliment descending from the waist, and tucked up from the height of the knee, and a turban formed of a coloured handkerchief. The women follow the Burman fashion.

The established law is that prevalent in Ava, but it yields occasionally to local customs. The people are strict Búddhists. They live on rice, fish, venison, pork, and, in general, on the flesh of almost every sort of animal and reptile; but they seldom use beef or poultry, and do not make butter. The milk of their buffaloes, too, although rich and nutritious, is not a common article of diet. Goats are scarce, and there are no sheep. It was not without difficulty that a sufficient supply of provisions was obtained for the European officers and men on their first arrival. Fine fish was, however, daily supplied; and the calf of the buffalo became a tolerable substitute for veal. Wheaten bread, like several other European luxuries, was not procured until Indian and Chinese bakers arrived. The usual tropical fruits, including the mangosteen and dorian, thrive here, but are not very abundant.

It is not to be expected that in this country, so thinly peopled in proportion to its extent and fertility, the price of labour should be low; it may, generally viewed, be thought high: the fourth part of a Spanish dollar a day may be stated as the average rate, when first occupied by us; perhaps six dollars a month may be the present average rate. But a Burman, unless stimulated by having a personal interest in the quantity of work to be done, is indolent, and requires to be constantly watched.

The natives of Mergui are fond of dancing, music, and song; and are well supplied with materials for theatrical exhibitions from the never-failing theme of SRI RAMA'S adventures. They are much attached to puppets. They sing in a strained voice, like the Chinese.

Women are on the whole well treated, and placed nearly on a footing of equality with the men; and they are but rarely subjected to chastisement by their husbands,—an exemption which the Hindústani female does not enjoy. They are also allowed a sufficient

share of personal freedom, and not unfrequently "wear the turban;" but when they do so, it is generally for the pecuniary advantage of the indolent hen-pecked husband, who wants the energy required to look after his household and other affairs. Although a marriage too frequently assumes the features of a sale, yet, as far as could be learned, the inclinations of the woman are seldom forced.

The Kareans have not been noticed in the table of population of the province, since their roving habits prevented any precise account of them being given to me; a short description of the wild tribes, and also of the more civilised, but secluded ones, which are to be found in the woody or mountainous parts of the Indo-Chinese regions, together with collated specimens of their languages, might prove instructive.

#### MERGUI AND TANNAU. — MERGUI.

The town of Mergui has been built on the sides and along the skirts of an irregular hill, which is not perhaps more than two hundred feet in height: the position is strong against a native force, but feeble in presence of a European one, since it is accessible to ships, and may be commanded from a high island in front.

But were this latter point fortified, and the town works improved, it might probably admit of a good defence: on the west and south-west is the river; and in the latter direction there is a muddy creek, and much difficult ground, rendering an approach barely practicable. On the east and south-east is a rice swamp; and on the north, the works surmount and command a sloping bank, which is however accessible; a deep dry fosse has been carried along those parts not naturally defended: the whole place was, when taken, inclosed by a stockade of thick beams and sections of whole trees about ten feet high, and there was a battery on the brow of the hill facing the river.

The streets of the town are wide, and would be much dirtier than they then seemed, were it not for the occasional cleansing they get from the rain-water, which runs in small rapid currents down the ravines and declivities along the hill: they are also badly paved, and where they have been made on a slope, are little better than gutters in the rainy season. The houses are composed for the most part of the perishable materials used on this coast, such as wooden posts inserted in the ground, light wooden rafters, bamboos, hipah palm-leaves, and matting: they are much inferior in neatness and convenience to the Tavoy ones. Several small but pleasant houses have been constructed on the ridge of the hill by European gentlemen residing there. Before this was effected, they were obliged either to occupy the

crazy Burman houses, or the dilapidated Kyauns on the same ridge. The chief entrance to the town is on the river side, through a mean brick gateway, but not arched; it had several other wooden gateways, and at one of these, on the north face of the stockade, the British troops stormed. With the exception of a few small pagodas on the hill, and on the eminences beyond the northern gate, and the bastions at the principal angles of the works, there are no brick or stone buildings in the place: the bricks of this coast are reckoned durable, but they are seldom put together with mortar; clay is most commonly used. The small sort cost, at Tavoy, about thirty-five ticals for 10,000; the larger kind, being thirteen inches long, six broad, and three in thickness, cost about fifty ticals for the same number (a *Burman lac*). The roofing tile is quite flat, about eight inches long and five broad; it is often put on the roof of a building without any cement.

On the whole, the situation of Mergui is peculiarly happy, whether it be viewed with reference to the mildness and salubrity of its climate,<sup>1</sup> the productiveness of the soil, or to the safe and agreeable shelter its harbour affords to ships during the violence of the south-west monsoon: it is cooled by sea breezes during the day, and by land winds at night. What is termed in India a *land-wind*, which is often injurious to health, is quite unknown on this coast, or in any of the provinces under review; but it may with truth be said, that these advantages are possessed by many other situations on the same coast, and by several of the islands. In the absence of some other station in this quarter which might give shelter to British shipping, and from which, in times of war, an enemy could be watched and prevented from gaining supplies, or could be attacked with advantage, the position of Mergui must be deemed rather an important one—and thus, perhaps, its value, in a political point of view, may counter-balance the inconveniences which attend the retaining a country so thinly inhabited, and therefore containing within itself few facilities for the improvement of its own resources. It is to be regretted that Junkceylon and St. Matthew's Island had not been in the possession of Ava when the war broke out; with the first (which would have soon fallen) as a permanent station, and the second as an outpost, every political object might have been easily and cheaply attained.

The Siamese have greatly neglected Junkceylon of late years, owing either to the difficulty of drawing to it an adequate population,

<sup>1</sup> Europeans were sent here from Rangoon, during the war, for the recovery of their health.

or from some other cause. They would certainly have taken possession of Mergui, or have tried to do so, had the British abandoned it; but whether they now covet it, as formerly, does not appear. They may possibly dread a renewal, to their disadvantage in the main, of the cruel wars which endured so long betwixt them and the Burmans. The Siamese and Tannau people are bitter enemies of each other, and therefore there is not much probability of their ever uniting against the present rulers of the province.

## TAVOY.

The chief town of Tavoy is situated on the eastern bank of the river; it consists of two parts,—the inner town, which is surrounded by a wall about fifteen feet high, mostly built of brick, and the outer one also hemmed in by a wall of brick and mud, but only about eight feet high, and much decayed: the inner wall has now in part been reduced to the height of eight feet. The whole place forms an irregular square, contracted on the east side; it is not very defensible, and is commanded by heights on the east; it contained about 1400 houses in 1824; these are much more substantial and comfortable than the Mergui houses. The streets were badly paved with bricks laid edgewise, but they have since been improved.

In 1824–25, a table of the population of this province was made out by me partly from Burman rolls, but chiefly from actual personal observation; on these rolls much reliance could not be placed, but they served as general guides. Burmans and Peguers form the chief body of the people, and the remainder consists of Chinese, native Christians, and other settlers. The British troops have been excluded from this enumeration. At the period alluded to, the population seemed to rest thus:—

	Houses.	Souls.
1. Tavoy town and suburbs, divided into eighteen compartments . . . . .	1400	7000
2. One hundred and ten villages, some scattered hamlets and monasteries . . . . .	1800	9000
Kareans not included . . . . .	1800	—
Total native population . . . . .		16000

This number has since increased to about 23,600 souls, exclusive of Kareans and Chalome of the islands. The present fixed population stands nearly thus:—

Tavoyers.....	22,200
Peguers .....	2,100
Chinese .....	300
Kareans and Chalome .....	1,850
	<hr/>
	26,450
Native Christians (Portuguese) about ..	50
	<hr/>
Total ....	<u>26,500</u>

In the above first-stated total of 16,000 souls, there were about 4600 men capable of active employment, and in it the proportion of females exceeded that of the males by about one in fifteen: there were about 250 Phingees or priests, and two thousand (as nearly as could be learned) *debtors*,<sup>1</sup> of both sexes and all ages. It does not appear that Tavoy at any period contained more than 30,000 souls. In 1793, when the then governor of Tavoy delivered up the place to the Siamese under their Prince Regent, the latter carried 5000 inhabitants of every description into captivity or slavery; and when *Dainvoun*, the Burmese general, attacked Junkeeylon, the Tavoyers lost, it is said, nearly twice the above number. We may allow one half of the latter statement to be near the truth.

An excess of 1000 females over the number of males in the whole population is easily to be accounted for: Tavoy was long exposed to the inroads of the Siamese, who carried off the men when at a distance from their homes. The Burman conscriptive system also drew, at times, largely on the people; and, lastly, the custom sanctioned by Burman law prevalent amongst the people, of selling their services (particularly of women), or those of their children, was calculated to throw into the families of the richest classes an undue proportion of females. A stranger cannot fail, on entering the town of Tavoy, to remark the crowds of women seen in the streets: this does not, in a very manifest degree, arise from the disproportion alluded to, but is owing to the freedom women here enjoy, and which so favourably contrasts with the savage custom which immures them within the walls of an Indian harem, or domestic prison.

The condition of the debtors ostensibly originates in a contract formally entered into by the parties, and liable to be dissolved by a repayment of the sum lent; but, under the Burman sway, a person of this description was rarely found able to emancipate himself; and his debt, with all the accumulated sums and value of articles given to him and his family, descended to the latter at his death. The wife

<sup>1</sup> Persons who sell their services.

was first liable, and, on her death, the children; the husband in like manner paid the debts of his deceased wife, but the children of a debtor might sell their services during his life, and thus escape the obligation to pay his debt, unless their names had been inserted in the deed. Parents were, however, answerable for the debt of a child on his death, if contracted with their knowledge. After the place was taken, numbers of female debtors found means to emancipate themselves. The young women had little difficulty, as many formed half matrimonial connexions with the British soldiers, both European and native of all ranks. When debtors are not employed in the business of their masters they work elsewhere, paying however to the former about five pice, or the ninth part of a rupee daily.

In such a country as this is, comprising *Tannau*, *Tavoy*, and *Martaban*, including *Yé*, which is so insulated with respect to our Indian possessions as to render no two cases which affect them both parallel, where the population does not amount to four persons to every square mile, colonization might perhaps be attempted with success. Here large tracts of forest would be free to the new settlers under proper limitations, and they would soon amalgamate with the natives, and originate a new race. Here are no castes, no forbidding superstitions, and scarcely any thing like intolerance.

The women may marry foreigners, and they are well disposed to do so; while the men are indifferent on the subject, if their own private privileges are not interfered with. Although unreserved in general in their conduct, yet the women of the respectable classes rarely betray any want of chastity and decorum; they are intelligent, frank, lively, and talkative, and retort with smartness without shewing ill-nature. They are very industrious and well versed in household economy. All these qualifications supply the want of any superior degree of feminine delicacy or beauty — to which their pretensions are not so strong as those of the Hindú girls and Musalmánis of India. The women are employed in the rice fields during harvest; they beat out rice, spin thread, weave cloth (for amongst the Indo-Chinese the men are seldom weavers), retail petty goods, search for roots and esculents, mushrooms, and other edible substances, and are quick in money calculations. The women are also cooks; although every man of the lower classes, and perhaps most of those in the higher, know how to dress a meal: this is no difficult task, since rice and a little seasoning, with a boiled fish, or a piece of meat roasted over the embers, is luxury to them.

The dishes found at the tables of the rich are more numerous, and are not disagreeable to a European palate: they do not swallow such



huge heaps of rice as a native of India does at a meal, but use it sparingly like the Chinese. Their cooking utensils are of iron or of earthenware; they eat twice a-day, once early in the forenoon, and again in the evening; the meats are chopped and put into small cups and saucers, as are the vegetables and seasonings; the latter consist of balachong or caviare, nipah vinegar pickles, and acid fruits; these are served up in lacquered circular trays having high-peaked covers.

All the members of a family eat together; and if china-ware is not procurable, or they cannot afford it, each has a portion of rice served out on a lacquered plate: they help themselves generally by spoons to the other dishes, but most commonly convey the viands to the mouth with their fingers.

The provisions which may be got in the bazars on this coast are elephant's-flesh, venison, poultry, hog's-flesh, rice, Indian corn, eggs, milk, yams, and sweet potatoes, and a few esculents, fish, and articles imported from India or Penang, fruits, &c. The poorer natives will eat frogs, guanas, and other reptiles, and, most of them, animals which have died a natural death. Monkeys are also eaten; buffalo-hide, prepared in a peculiar way, is occasionally eaten; the *taun-palan*, a long white semipellucid worm which is found in decayed wood, is reckoned a delicacy, as are termes, and other kinds of ants. When invited to eat with Europeans, a well-bred Burman becomes very soon at home, for he strictly watches the actions of his guest and others at table, and imitates them so well, that he scarcely betrays any awkwardness after two or three trials. They will in general drink indifferently any liquor that is offered to them; *beer* is universally relished by most eastern people, and not least by those whose religion forbids them to taste intoxicating drinks. They prefer the strange mixture of pickled tea-leaf, with oil of sesame, onions, garlic, salt, ginger, and cocoa-nut, to the simple infusion of the dry tea-plant: the plant, at least one species of it, grows in the hilly parts of the countries bordering on the east of Ava Proper. It is always sent along with invitations to dinner or a feast: if a person who receives an invitation cannot attend, it is expected that he shall send some one to fill his place: some of the men who affect a strict adherence to Buddhist tenets will not taste wine or spirits; these have vowed abstinence from certain luxuries and indulgences, or abstain from them, either on principle, or to gain credit with the multitude; those who take sanctimonious oaths allow their beards to grow, and are sedate in their deportment; they mix, however, in society, and do not debar themselves from any reasonable pleasure.

The Peguer inhabitants eat at sunrise, and their fare scarcely

differs from that of the Burman peasantry; the Burmans reproach them with being gluttons. The natives of both sexes of these coasts are habitual smokers of tobacco: the first thing presented to a stranger, whether European or native, on his entering a house, is a *siwelít*, or segar; even children of three years of age may be seen whiffing with as great gravity as their seniors; the chief men use finely polished wooden pipes mounted in silver, with silver bowls.

The climate of Tavoy is not so cool as that of Mergui and Martaban; it is shut out from the sea by a low range of hills, and lies on a plain. In the dry season it is subject to fogs, and the variation of the temperature within twenty-four hours often amounts to 30 degrees of Fahrenheit. In the Jungly parts of the country the temperature, during the hot season, has been observed by me to be so low, at six A.M., as 64° of the same scale, and at four P.M., so high as 90°: on the whole, however, the dry part of the year is agreeable; but the rainy season is very unpleasant and generally unhealthy. The whole flat country is then a sheet of water; in which are seen the villages, like islands, scattered about.

#### YÉ.

The town of this name is romantically built on a long hill about one hundred feet in elevation; the Yé river washes the south side of the rising ground; on the north and west the place is protected by a tank and broken ground, and on the east are old ditches, and swamps beyond them; a stockade hems in the town, but it was, in 1825, scarcely twelve feet high in any part. The place is capable of being rendered strong; it did not hold out or offer resistance when Captain O'Reilly was sent to take it in 1824, probably owing to the flight of the chief to Bassein, after Martaban had fallen. The town then consisted of only 150 houses, and wore the aspect of decay: they reckoned but twelve hundred souls for the whole population of the district, and those chiefly Peguers. The Burmans allege that it used to be a place of refuge for thieves and outlaws. Since the place was occupied by the British, the inhabitants have been orderly and peaceably inclined; provisions were so scarce, that my departure from it was hastened by the apprehension that my party would consume all the spare supplies of the inhabitants.

The tank behind the stockade was covered with wild ducks of a larger size than the common duck, and speckled with white on a dark ground; whistling teal were also abundant; so that a pleasant change of food was procured: no vegetables were seen in the bazár, if a few wretched stalls might have deserved the name. The Siamese used to make inroads on this small province to carry off the people,

which accounts for the dilapidated appearance of the town. At the period alluded to, one of the former Burman chiefs was in charge of the place, but no troops were left with him : he paid me a visit in full uniform, which consisted of a British staff dress given to him by Colonel Miles, when he was appointed to his command by that officer ; a sorry band of musicians accompanied him, of whom he seemed half ashamed, and apologised for their mean appearance, by saying that the country had been nearly depopulated by wars. He sat down to table, and partook of tea, and afterwards of brandy and wine, and left me in a very happy state of exhilaration.

#### MARTABAN,

The chief Burman town of this province. It is situated on the north bank of the *San-lín* river, at the point where it separates into two branches ; it has been built at the foot of a long hill ; this ridge is very steep, and perhaps about 200 feet in height ; it forms part of the *Jenhyait* range. There are two principal streets, one of which stretches from the wharf gate to within two hundred yards of the great northern gate, and the other is only about half the length of this one, and nearly parallel with it. These streets are stony, and, when rain falls, very miry, for the water runs through numberless small channels from the hill, and crosses the streets and roads on its way to the river : the houses in general are meanly constructed with light materials, and are raised three or four feet from the ground on posts. Many old, substantially built monasteries stand along the brow of the hill, and beyond the northern gate. Several of these were appropriated for the reception of the officers and men who garrisoned the place after it fell, and they were found very spacious, and, for this country, comfortable quarters. The Burman governor's house was a shabby, but large building of the usual light materials ; it was accidentally burned after the storming of the town.

The bazárs are held at the sides of the streets, at an early hour in the morning, and, for about two hours, in the cool part of the afternoon ; women are the only sellers. There are several pagodas scattered about, but the only one deserving of notice is situated within the battery-square, where the British troops were quartered ; it is about 150 feet high, and the design is chaster than that generally found in many other buildings dedicated to the Buddhist worship.

The whole of the top of the ridge at the foot of which the town stands, the town itself, and the south face of the ridge, have been inclosed by a stockade of strong beams, about ten feet, on an average, in height : there are many gates in this wall.

## POPULATION.

It has been already noticed, that Martaban province exhibits traces of having been once more populous than it now is. The number of souls may be rated, for the period to which this account refers, at 50,000 as a maximum, in which number are included 20,000 Kareans.

Since the British have occupied the southern portion of the province, the Peguers of the lower provinces of Ava (Pegu Proper) have sent forth large parties to seek protection from Burman vengeance or misrule, under the milder influence of the new masters of this part of the coast; and increased the scanty population, as far as my information extends, on the south of the *San-lín*, to about 50,000 souls of all classes, or as follows:—

Burmans and Peguers . . . . .	48,000
Kareans and other scattered races, and Chinese, &c. . . . .	2,000
Total . . . . .	50,000

DRESS, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS, OF THE INHABITANTS OF  
TANNAU AND MERGUL.

The natives of these provinces, of all classes, are fond of rich and expensive dresses, and generally spend all their surplus money on them. Natives of Hindústán, on the other hand, will go in a state little short of absolute nudity, while they adorn their necks, ears, and fingers, with valuable gold ornaments and jewels. In this respect the latter most resemble the Siamese, who generally appear to consider the wearing of clothes higher up than the waist as an encumbrance to their motion.

The Burman jewellery is of a rather inferior description, even as an Eastern manufacture. The stones, if cut at all, are very imperfectly finished, and the setting shews little taste or skill in the workmen; they can, however, make gold and silver chains, and boxes of tolerable appearance; but these are not to be compared to Indian or Chinese articles of a similar sort, or even to those of Malayan workmanship.

The women, generally considered, in this country use very few superfluous ornaments. They rest satisfied with some rings, set with cats-eyes and rubies. Enjoying as they do a great share of personal freedom, they could not perform the duties assigned to them if manacled with ear and nose rings of unwieldy size, necklaces, heavy bracelets and waist-belts, anklets and toe rings, like the women of India.

Perhaps, however, it will be found that the husbands of the economical Burman dames are not quite so fully exempted as might be supposed, from the above account, from the domestic tax of pin-money. Silk is the fashionable cloth, from the king downwards to the cultivator, and is always worn by the women when they can get it. Fine cottons and muslins are also much in request.

The use of silk is not in this climate conducive to cleanly habits ; for although a Burman is sufficiently attentive to ablutions, yet he does not consider it always requisite to give his clothes the benefit of them too ; and, if in poverty, will, like the lowest class of Malays, often allow his garment to drop by tatters from off his body. The Karean cloth is worn by the lower orders, on account of its durability and warmth. It is commonly very narrow, seldom exceeding a foot in breadth.

The Mons, or Peguers, have in a great measure adopted the Burman costume, which is rather elegant for the men, but indecorous, in European eyes, for the women, since the leg is exposed in walking even above the knee. Burmans dress occasionally in large turbans ; but the true national head-dress is a handkerchief twisted into a knot with the hair, and brought to a point above the forehead. Their hair is generally cropped, with the exception of a spot on the crown of the head ; from this a long tail depends, which is rather inconvenient in action with an enemy. When the women dress themselves out for conquest, they sometimes wear small turbans too ; and these give them a very coquettish air.

In the rains, the men use enormous umbrella-hats<sup>1</sup> of basket or rush work : some of these are four feet five inches in diameter. They are very light, and require some management when the wind is high.

Officers of rank wear leather caps, either gilded or lackered : the former resemble the caps of fire-engine men. Inferior officers have black varnished leather ones. All ranks except priests wear shoes or sandals made either of wood or leather, with cloth straps. These are pulled off on entering a house of respectability. Priests have no cloth on their sandals, such being reckoned too gay.

The Tennasserim people, with the exception of some of the Karean tribes, who have only occasionally a few charms punctured in their skins, tattoo themselves like the Burmans of Ava, and the inhabitants of Loas. In this respect they widely differ from the Siamese, who consider the practice as barbarous ; perhaps they have discarded it in order that they might be better distinguished from their ancient enemies the Burmans. The legs, hips, and arms, are the parts of the

<sup>1</sup> A specimen of one is in the Royal Asiatic Society's Museum.

body chiefly submitted to the operation; and this last is with these people essential to mark the period of manhood. The tattooer uses a very long gold stylus. The operation is tedious and rather painful, as several gentlemen informed me, who out of curiosity submitted to this disfigurement of their nether man. As a slight fever is produced by the irritation, the patient is ordered to live sparingly, and to attend to some superstitious observances.

The colouring matter is the lamp-black produced by burning sesame-oil under an old cooking-pot, which a priest has used in collecting his daily provisions. The lamp-black is mixed with the gall of an alligator, of a guana, or of a flying fox: the red is vermilion. When charms, to render the person invulnerable, are tattooed, the operation must take place in the *Thein*, or "place of idols." They have books containing directions for every kind of tattooing; and figures of the animals and other objects before noticed. A Burman's skin is often covered with a variety of representations of real and fabulous animals and birds, of pagodas, and other objects; and accompanied by Bali sentences of potent efficacy, in his apprehension, in averting evils of every kind. Tattooing has prevailed from the earliest ages. In Holy Writ the people are enjoined "not to print any marks on their bodies."—Leviticus, chap. xix.

The chief features of character which distinguish the Burmans from the *Mons* are these: The former are proud, vain, ambitious, and warlike, fond of the excitation created by their religious festivals and by speculative pursuits; while they would, if possible, assign over to the Peguers and Kareans the drudgery of the field. The *Mons*, on the other hand, are modest, simple, retired, and attached to domestic enjoyment; brave as an Indo-Chinese people, especially when goaded by oppression, but generally very submissive to authority; agriculturists by profession, attentive to the duties enjoined by the Buddhist religion, and generally temperate in their habits.

Any person who should endeavour to portray the character of either of these two people, from an observation of their political institutions merely, would be led into error. Both are fond of domestic ease, both social and hospitable, and generally fair in their dealings; but a state of war is too apt to convert them into ruthless barbarians. These institutions were framed for the benefit of the governing, not of the governed. They neither arose from, nor were they properly adapted to, the feelings of the great mass of the people. There is no cementing rank betwixt the servants of the state, who are the nobility by sufferance for the time being, and the serf who drives his buffalo, and who, were he a "village Hampden," or an incipient Buonaparte,

may raise himself to the highest dignities of the empire. The despot of to-day will crouch and lick the dust to-morrow, before the promoted slave on whom he had but just trampled. Betwixt those who have, and those who want power, there is no sympathy; and the fall of any man of rank is looked at with perfect indifference, by men who have learned by experience that Burman power is a ramified spirit, which does not alter its nature by any transmigration which it may undergo.

The natural tendency of these people is to hospitality; and they have been known to exercise this virtue towards strangers when it could not have been agreeable to their rulers.

When traversing the country, the villagers invariably pressed and vied with each other in making me welcome to what their huts afforded. The women on these occasions did not run to hide themselves, like the less virtuous yet affected Hindustani females, on the approach of a stranger, but continued their occupations, which were weaving, dying thread, spinning, &c.

Burman children are very respectful to their parents. When a youth leaves home to go on a journey or voyage, he lays his head at their feet and entreats their forgiveness for past faults, and their blessing for the future. They, in turn, kiss his cheek. By kissing is not implied the European mode of salutation, but a strong inhalation through the nose,—a custom which is deserving of notice, since it is found to be extant amongst all the Indo-Chinese nations, the Malays, the islanders of the Archipelago, and in China. A social or family trait of this nature, so prevalent and peculiar, may be considered as pointing to some remote connexion betwixt the various tribes which have adopted it.

#### BURMAN MARRIAGE.

The Burman ceremonies are observed. The parents of the youth send certain friends to ask the consent of the girl's relations. A time is fixed by her parents, and the couple are allowed to see each other frequently: but they reckon August, September, October, and November, unlucky, and do not marry during them. In these four months a priest is not allowed to become a layman. When the youth, accompanied by his friends and some elders and relatives, reaches the house of the bride, the oldest man, or elder of the village, takes two nosegays, and gives one to each, beginning with the bride. The presents by this time have been arranged before the parents. These consist generally of three trays, two containing fruit, and a

third, cloth or other articles : on a fourth tray are certain presents intended for the bride. She sits on the left of the party, and the bridegroom on the right.

The elder now gives the bride a nosegay, and makes her repeat some Bali sentences, first directed to her father, again to her mother, next to the parents of the bridegroom, and lastly, to her husband. The bridegroom goes through the same ceremony, beginning with his parents and relatives, but does not address the bride. The elder then takes the flower from the bride, and places it on the wall of the house ; she takes a little rolled up betel leaf, &c. and presents it to the bridegroom, who exchanges the flower for it. They then both sit on one mat, the bridegroom on the right. A feast ensues, and they finish the ceremonies by eating out of the same dish.

Marriage is here quite a civil affair, and has often too much the appearance of a bargain. The youth of both sexes are, however, allowed opportunities of choosing occasionally for themselves ; and in general it may be said that the marriage state in this country is much more favourable for the women than it is in Hindústán.

In Mergui, and even in Tavoy, the suitor is frequently expected to serve for two or three years the parents of the girl. If no marriage should ensue, they must pay back an equivalent for his service. Hardly any ceremony takes place on a marriage at Mergui.

The consent of parents is commonly obtained for the marriage of a daughter. A feast is given when the suitor proves successful ; bands of music attend ; and, where the parents of the respective parties are poor, the expenses are defrayed by them in common. An elder, or soothsayer, of the village is brought ; he joins the hands of the bride and bridegroom, who then present each other with a little boiled rice out of a platter, of which they taste or eat, to signify their future community of interests. They next promise to be faithful, and to promote each other's happiness. The elder pronounces his blessing, and the ceremony is concluded.

They do not summon a priest on this occasion ; but, as it seems to have been formerly the practice for one to attend the ceremony of marriage, as well as others now purely of a civil nature, they receive presents of cloth, fruit, confections, and other things. When the girl can be had by purchase, or contract only, which, in polite parlance, may be termed a settlement, the man pays the price either in money or goods. But this is a disreputable alliance, and can be easily dissolved. The man who repudiates his wife, thus obtained,



cannot claim any money or goods which she may then have in her possession ; but if she, of her own accord, desire a separation, she leaves the house without any such, and with one suit of clothes only. Should he, after marriage, desire a separation, with or without the consent of his wife, the female children only of the marriage go with her, and she is at liberty to take her clothes, jewels, and whatever property and money she may have saved by her own industry. Should the wife alone desire a separation, she must pay to the husband double the expenses incurred by the marriage. The Burman civil law is apparently a commentary on MENU ;<sup>1</sup> and, as it exists in a digested form, might easily be translated.

When a child has attained the age of seven years, its head is shaved with much formality, and an entertainment is given, as is usual on every important occasion.

The boring of the ears of the female children at the age of nine, or from that period up to twelve, is also one of rejoicing. An old astrologer next inspects the horoscope, and foretells a fortunate hour for giving the child a name. The visitors are expected to present the child with money, or something of value. On occasions of this nature, the parents have sent a present to me of a few flowers, and some betel and areca, in expectation of a more valuable return.

The Burmans and Peguers of this province *generally* burn their dead ; but all persons under the age of fifteen are buried. If a woman dies in childbed, the body is burned *on the bank of a river* ; hence the Tavoy women when quarrelling, exclaim, *Kyaun nã pao* : " May you be burned on a river's bank." The lower classes, however, seldom burn the body of a person who has died accidentally or suddenly, but bury it. The body of an executed criminal is exposed to birds and wild beasts : the reason for not burning the body, as above stated, was not assigned, but it was probably a superstitious one. The body of the high-priest who died at Martaban, just after its capture, was burned in the way which is described in SYMES'S *Ava*. It was placed on a pile ; a wire was stretched from it to a distance, and, along this, a rocket was ignited, which set fire to the pile. So much oil and petroleum were used for this ceremony, that the ground, which was mossy, continued burning for about a week after

<sup>1</sup> Two several translations of *parts* of the Burmese code have, I understand, been made by Lieut. SHERMAN, and given over to the civil authorities ; and also one by Mr. BLUNDELL, of the Penang civil service. I have not been so fortunate as to see either of them.

its conclusion. The expense attending a funeral amongst the lower orders is defrayed by a collection from the friends of the deceased. The priests are not neglected on such occasions. Music is an essential accompaniment of Burman ceremonies, whether of a gay or a mournful tendency. Professed dancing-girls are not numerous: there were a few in Tavoy, but their attitudes seemed fully as much strained as those of the Indian *nách*-girls, and less graceful.

The people here play at chess<sup>1</sup> (*chetre*), drafts (*hya*), with eight pieces of a side, and at football,<sup>2</sup> and games of chance. The football is made of wicker, and is kicked into the air by men who stand in a circle twelve or fifteen yards in diameter. This game seems to be confined to the Chinese, the Indo-Chinese, and the Malays. They have *naban hya*, or wrestling matches, in which the Burmans display much muscular strength and no small degree of art. They also at certain festivals have their men of "*the fancy*;" and the pugilists are only allowed to go through a limited number of rounds, so that they are seldom much hurt: but in presence of the Golden Foot they fight more violently.

The Burmese fence (*thejyeit*) with sticks ten or twelve feet long, which they hold with both hands near the middle. They fight cocks with artificial spurs; but these are generally made of bone or of an alligator's tooth, or even of a human bone, if the parties are of royal extraction, and so shaped as to resemble the natural spur: and they keep in jars, apart from each other, many fish of a small species found in fresh water, for the purpose of fighting. Each party lets out a fish into a basin, and bets are laid by the owners: the fish is the *plakat* of the Siamese, who also amuse themselves by exhibiting their puny encounters. Buffalo fights are occasionally exhibited, especially after harvest. I was present at one at Tavoy, before the ex-chief, or *Myáwán*, who gave up the place, and had quite relinquished all authority. The party which accompanied him and his family, consisted of the officers of the British detachment; and it was amusing on this occasion, to those used to Indian manners, to see the chief's wife walk in, arm-in-arm with our commanding officer, and to remark the absence of all absurd shyness in the other females. The concourse of persons of both sexes amounted to several thousands. The buffaloes were baited against each other by pairs, in the middle of a circle formed by the crowd: they were directed by men on their backs, one to each. The riders dexterously evaded the horns of the

<sup>1</sup> Selbiren.

<sup>2</sup> Keyen lion.

animals, when they happened to take them in flank, by slipping off, and then mounting again; very few, however, of the buffaloes would remain after the second or third round, and, as they rushed through the crowd, many persons were severely hurt.

At the period corresponding with the Holi festival of the Hindús, the Burmans squirt water on passengers: the ladies and females in general indulge greatly in the diversion, and no doubt take this way of bringing on a conversation with some favoured swain.

Many of the games played by the children resemble those in use in Europe. *Kites* are not confined to children merely: they are cut into many fantastic shapes, and are of different colours. The boys play at a sort of marbles, only employing a flattish oval seed or fruit. Boat races are run at a stated period every year, at the breaking-up of the monsoon; and their numerous festivals, which correspond with those of the Hindús in point of time, and exhibit many traits which serve to link them with the latter, afford the people many opportunities for festivity and innocent enjoyment. They are not outrageously noisy, like Europeans and British Indians, at their festivals, and are rarely seen intoxicated or quarrelling with each other.

Burman governors assume as much of regal authority and external pomp as they safely dare to adopt. The Martaban and Tavoy governors had their musical bands, and a party of actors each: the theatre was generally a large saloon connected with the palace. That at Tavoy formed afterwards an excellent regimental mess-room.

Amongst the things exclusively appertaining to royal state, are white silk umbrellas. One of these is larger than the rest, and is the *kyein*, or state umbrella of seven tiers. The number of umbrellas is rated at seven.

#### CLIMATE.

The climate of Martaban is pleasant: it was very healthy during the war, and is believed to be so now. Out of a regiment of Sepoys, which was nine hundred strong, and stationed within the area of the great pagoda, the average number of sick men rarely exceeded twenty-five; and their European officers kept in good health. The rains begin about the latter part of May or first week in June, and continue with little intermission until September: the weather then becomes moderate. The rains cease about the end of November. The maximum temperature during the rains is about 85° Fahrenheit.

and the minimum,  $70^{\circ}$ ; the average heat is about  $80^{\circ}$ , and the average cold,  $78^{\circ}$ . The cold season succeeds the rainy: the sky is then unclouded, and though the sun's rays are hot, the north-east wind, which blows regularly, renders it cool in the shade. The thermometer may be then said to range from the sixtieth to the eightieth degree, during the twenty-four hours.

The three cool months are succeeded by three hot ones; but, compared with western India, these are temperate. There are no hot winds; and, at the warmest period of the day, the greatest range seldom exceeds  $90^{\circ}$ , while the average may be stated at  $86^{\circ}$ . The minimum of temperature at sunrise in wooded spots may be given at  $60^{\circ}$ , and the average at  $70^{\circ}$ . Cool sea breezes blow regularly during the day, when not checked by wind from any other quarter.

It only remains to be observed generally, that Martaban has disadvantages attending its situation to weigh against its resources and capabilities. The advantages it enjoys are chiefly these:—It lies open to the sea, and maintains a mercantile intercourse with neighbouring ports, and the interior regions; its climate is salubrious and agreeable; its numerous rivers offer every facility for the transport of goods; grain and cattle in it are cheap; its hills and forests yield valuable products; its inhabitants are, for an Eastern people, on the whole industrious, and free from the tyranny of caste, and from bigotry; and it offers a wide field for agricultural improvement and the advance of the arts.

On the other hand, the population of the province is but scanty. It lies exposed along the line of its eastern frontier to the predatory expeditions of the Siamese, who had ruined one half of it before the British established themselves at Amherst. It is also chiefly peopled by the Mon or Pegu race, who have not yet quite lost all recollection of the former independent condition of their country, and would readily make common cause with any people against the Burmans, could they be assured of not afterwards reverting to the rule of the latter.

Martaban has not, besides, any perfectly safe harbour for shipping outside of the bar of the *San-lán* river; and the entrance to the harbour, within the bar, is, to say the least of it, inconvenient, if not dangerous at many times, for ships attempting to pass it; and although the revenues of the *whole* province might, under wise management, meet, or even considerably exceed, every item of public expenditure, yet it remains to be shewn, whether the worst half, which has fallen to be the share of the British, will realise any such expectation with respect

to it, especially should any unlucky events call for an additional support to it of troops. Its position on the Burman frontier will always render it prudent to keep up a respectable force for its protection. In common justice the Siamese ought to contribute to its defence, since the interposition of the British territory betwixt them and their ancient foe affords them a degree of security in this quarter, to which they were ever strangers; and relieves them from the expense of keeping an army on their own frontier.

[ *To be continued.* ]